



# **PRESS RELEASE**

## **NORMAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

According to preliminary data, during 2011, Norman police investigated almost 3,000 motor vehicle collisions, 5 of which involved a fatality and 661 resulted in injuries. The 2011 numbers indicate an increase of more than 200 crashes when compared with 2010. The police department asks all residents to drive carefully, and with everyone doing their share, hopefully, we can reduce the number of collisions during 2012.

When examining the cause of 2011 collisions, the most frequent ticket issued by investigating officers was "inattentive driving." Many intersection collisions were due to signal light violations, to one degree or another, including disregarding a red light, failing to clear the intersection on a yellow light, or failing to yield while turning left.

Traffic crashes are the single most significant cause of preventable death and injury in North America. Running a red light is a dangerous form of aggressive driving and a serious intersection safety issue nationwide. Norman is no exception. In fact, the police department receives complaints by motorist on a daily basis for a variety of traffic violations, but nothing is quite as frightening as experiencing a near miss because someone failed to stop for a signal light.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) *Traffic Safety Facts 2008 Report*, there were more than 2.3 million reported intersection-related crashes, resulting in more than 7,770 fatalities and approximately 733,000 injury crashes in 2008. Some sources assert that red light running is the leading cause of all urban automobile crashes in America, where too often the yellow light has come to symbolize "hurry up" instead of "slow down." In fact, the leading excuse given for red light running was neither frustration nor road rage; it was "being in a hurry."

All motorists have a responsibility to drive safely. The police will shoulder its share of the load to help reduce collisions, but we cannot solve any problem alone. With the public's help, we can decrease collisions and all reap the benefits of having a safe city. By the way, buckle up!